

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 CU-02 EUR-12 /092 W

----- 120250

R 101632Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8316

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 2253/1

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: MEA WISH TO CONTROL MISSION CONTACTS WITH FMG

OFFICES AND WITH LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

REF: LAGOS 1685

1. SUMMARY: MEA DEMARCHE MARCH 7: (A) CALLED FOR U.S. EMBASSY/ MISSION TO HANDLE EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH MEA CHANNELS EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE GRANTS INVOLVING FMG OFFICIALS; (B) OBJECTED TO LABOR OFFICER'S CONTACTING LABOR ORGANIZATIONS DIRECTLY AND ASSERTED HE SHOULD CHANNEL CONTACTS THROUGH MEA; AND (C) CALLED FOR ALL EMBASSY CONTACTS TO BE CHanneLED THROUGH MEA. WE CAN LIVE WITH REQUIREMENT (A), BUT (B) AND (C) WOULD SET DANGEROUS PRECEDENT FOR MEA CONTROL OF ALL EMBASSY CONTACTS. WE BELIEVE THIS SHOULD BE STRONGLY RESISTED AND PROPOSE ADHERE TO PRESENT MODI OPERANDI WHILE SEEKING WAYS OF LOWERING LABOR OFFICER'S PROFILE AND AVOIDING ANY HIGHLY VISIBLE MISSION ACTIONS THAT MIGHT PRECIPITATE A FOLLOW-ON DEMARCHE. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS AND GUIDANCE. END SUMMARY

2. CHARGE WAS SUMMONED MARCH 7 TO TALK WITH AMBASSADOR OLISEMEKA, HEAD OF MEA AMERICA DEPARTMENT. AFTER FRIENDLY DISCUSSION OTHER SUBJECTS, OLISEMEKA CAME TO THE POINT WITH  
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POLITE BUT STERN DEMARCHE ON MISSION CONTACTS WITH FMG

MINISTRIES, LABOR UNIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. HE STARTED OUT WITH EXPRESSION OF DISPLEASURE (WHICH HE SAID EMANATED IN FIRST INSTANCE FROM PERMSEC IYALLA) OVER LETTER EMBASSY HAD SENT MEA FEBRUARY 3 RE PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE (EDX) NOMINATIONS. HE OBJECTED TO "PATRONIZING TONE" OF LETTER AND TO FACT THAT EMBASSY HAD SPOKEN ONLY OF "INFORMING" MEA OF PROPOSED EDX GRANT NOMINATIONS BY DROP COPY OF LETTERS TO RELEVANT FMG MINISTRIES. OLISEMEKA ASSERTED MEA WANTS SUCH MATTERS CHanneled THROUGH IT AND DOES NOT WANT EMBASSY WRITING DIRECTLY TO FMG OFFICES OR MAKING SPECIFIC GRANTEE SUGGESTIONS BY NAME. HE CITED A USIS COMMUNICATION ADDRESSED TO NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS AND ONE FROM EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER (LABOR) TO MINISTRY OF LABOR, BOTH OFFERING GRANTS AND COPIES OF BOTH HAVING BEEN SENT MEA. HE SAID ALL SUCH EXCHANGE POSSIBILITIES SHOULD BE ADDRESSED SOLELY TO MEA, WHICH WOULD THEN CONTACT OTHER MINISTRIES AND SOLICIT NOMINATIONS. HE ADDED THAT MEA ITSELF MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT APPROPRIATENESS OF INDIVIDUAL GRANTS OFFERED.

3. CHARGE EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT MEA CONSIDERED EMBASSY LETTER TO AMERICA DEPARTMENT OFFENSIVE AND SAID IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING LETTER REFLECTED ORAL AGREEMENT REACHED BY EMBOFF AND AMERICA DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL REGARDING MODALITIES FOR HANDLING EDX NOMINATIONS. COMMENT: EMBOFF LATER CONFIRMED TO CHARGE THAT THIS WAS CASE AND THAT AMERICA DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL HAD EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE LETTER IN QUESTION AS BEING "MOST HELPFUL". END COMMENT. CHARGE ASSURED OLISEMEKA TONE OF LETTER WAS NOT INTENDED TO BE OFFENSIVE AND CHARGE DID NOT CONSIDER IT SO. OLISEMEKA SAID OUR SUGGESTION THAT EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH MEA ON EDX MIGHT USEFULLY BE CENTERED IN AMERICA DEPARTMENT WAS "INTERFERENCE IN MINISTRY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS". CHARGE REPLIED SUCH WAS NOT INTENDED; WAS MERELY AN EXPRESSION OF WHAT WE THOUGHT MIGHT BE AN EFFECTIVE ARRANGEMENT, CONSIDERING THE DIFFERENT AREAS IN WHICH EXCHANGES TAKE PLACE. THE OBSERVATION WAS MADE FOR MEA CONSIDERATION IN THE INTEREST OF AVOIDING POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS. COMMENT: SUGGESTION THAT EDX CONTACTS BE CENTERED IN AMERICA DEPARTMENT ALSO REFLECTED EMBOFF CONSENSUS WITH AMERICA DEPRATMENT OFFICIAL. END COMMENT.

4. OLISEMEKA THEN BROADENED THE DISCUSSION BY SAYING THE  
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HEAD OF STATE DID NOT WELCOME ANY EMBASSY'S ESTABLISHMENT OF DIRECT RELATIONS WITH NIGERIAN MINISTRIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. HE CITED SPECIFICALLY POLITICAL OFFICER (LABOR), WHOM THEY DID NOT WANT CONTACTING LABOR ORGANIZATIONS DIRECTLY. OLISEMEKA OBSERVED IN PASSING THAT HE HAD NOTED THE RECENT EXCHANGE OF NOTES REGARDING WHETHER THAT OFFICER WAS A LABOR ATTACHE OR NOT (LAGOS 1685); THIS WAS OF NO PARTICULAR INTEREST TO HIM, HE SAID, AND HE DID NOT WANT TO INTERFERE WITH DUTIES

ASSIGNED THAT OFFICER BY THE EMBASSY. BUT HE DID WANT  
CONTACTS OF THAT OFFICER AND THOSE OF OTHER PARTS OF THE  
EMBASSY TO BE CHanneLED THROUGH MEA.

5. OLISEMEKA THEN REFERRED TO A CONVERSATION HE HAD HAD SOME  
MONTHS AGO WITH AMBASSADOR REINHARDT WHERE IT HAD EMERGED  
THAT OF 51 AMERICANS ON THE DIPLOMATIC LIST, MEA HAD CONTACT  
WITH "ONLY TWO OR THREE." THIS LED THE MINISTRY TO WONDER  
WHAT THE REST OF THEM WERE DOING; THE MINISTRY WOULD FEEL  
MORE "CONFIDENT" IF ALL OUR OFFICIAL CONTACTS WERE HANDLED  
THROUGH IT. CHARGE ASKED WHETHER OLISEMEKA FELT EMBASSY HAD  
GIVEN FMG REASON FOR LACK OF CONFIDENCE ABOUT OUR ACTIVITIES.  
OLISEMEKA BACKED OFF PART WAY, ASSURING THAT THERE HAD BEEN  
NOTHING OF THE SORT, BUT NEVERTHELESS ITERATING THAT MINISTRY  
WANTED TO HAVE "A GREATER FEELING OF CONFIDENCE." CHARGE  
OFFERED CATEGORIC ASSURANCE THAT EMBASSY'S MISSION AND  
INTEREST IS TO FOSTER BEST POSSIBLE RELATIONS WITH FMG, TO  
CONTRIBUTE TO MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COMMERCIAL AND OTHER CONTACTS,  
AND TO MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENTAL  
EFFORTS.

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 IO-10 EUR-12 CU-02 AID-05

/092 W

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R 101632Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8317

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 2253/2

6. IN CONTEXT OF FURTHERING MUTUAL RELATIONS, CHARGE THEN SAID  
EMBASSY NATURALLY WANTED TO COOPERATE WITH MEA IN EVERY WAY

POSSIBLE AND WOULD GIVE OLISEMEKA'S VIEWS RE CONTACT MODALITIES VERY CAREFUL SCRUTINY. CHARGE EXPRESSED MISGIVINGS, HOWEVER, AS TO PRACTICALITY OF CHANNELING ALL EMBASSY CONTACTS THROUGH MEA AS PROPOSED AND POINTED OUT THERE ARE MANY CONTACTS OF A ROUTINE NATURE AND MINISTRY MIGHT WELL BE OVERBURDENED IF IT SOUGHT TO HANDLE THEM. CHARGE POINTED OUT THAT NIGERIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON MAINTAINS DIRECT CONTACTS WITH MANY DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT WITHOUT REFERENCE TO STATE DEPARTMENT; DEPARTMENT EXERCISES ITS COORDINATING ROLE THROUGH POLICY AND OPERATIONAL MEETINGS WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT CONCERNED, WITHOUT ENDEAVORING TO SERVE AS A FUNNEL OR FILTER FOR CONTACTS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS WITH VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT. CHARGE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT, AS HAD BEEN THE CASE WITH AMERICAN VISITORS WHOSE COMING WE ANNOUNCE BY NOTE TO MEA, IT IS GENERALLY SIMPLER AND PREFERABLE FROM MEA POINT OF VIEW FOR EMBASSY TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS. IT SAVES THE TIME AND EFFORT OF BUSY MINISTRY OFFICIALS FOR US TO TAKE CARE OF THESE MATTERS DIRECTLY, AND CHARGE SUSPECTED THIS WOULD ALSO BE TRUE IN MATTER OF GENERAL EMBASSY CONTACTS. CHARGE SAID, HOWEVER, HE WOULD DISCUSS MATTER WITH EMBASSY STAFF, CONSIDER WHAT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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INVOLVED AND RETURN TO DISCUSS FURTHER WITH OLISEMEKA AT LATER TIME. OLISEMEKA SAID THIS WOULD BE FINE AND ADDED THAT PERMSEC IYALLA MIGHT WELL WANT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH AMBASSADOR EASUM ON HIS ARRIVAL.

7. COMMENT: OLISEMEKA'S PRESENTATION EMBRACED THREE DISCREET PROBLEMS: (A) EXCHANGE GRANTS FOR FMG OFFICIALS; (B) ACTIVITIES OF OUR LABOR OFFICER; AND (C) GENERAL CONTACTS OF THE EMBASSY/ MISSION WITH FMG OFFICIALS. WHILE WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE FMG SATISFACTION ON FIRST OF THESE, LATTER TWO RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS FOR EMBASSY OPERATIONS AND SHOULD BE RESISTED.

8. WITH REGARD TO POINT (A), MEA WISH TO ACT AS MIDDLEMAN ON EXCHANGE GRANTS INVOLVING FMG OFFICIALS IS LONG-STANDING ISSUE, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT TO AVOID CONTROLLING MEA ROLE, BUT IT NOW SEEMS CLEAR THAT THERE IS NO WAY AROUND IT. (VARIOUS OTHER MISSIONS HAVE ALREADY BEEN OBLIGED TO OPERATE IN THIS MANNER.) WE WOULD THUS PROPOSE TO TRY HANDLING GRANTS TO FMG OFFICIALS THROUGH MEA AS THEY REQUEST, TO SEE HOW IT WORKS OUT IN PRACTICE. IF RESULTS ARE NOT SATISFACTORY, WE WOULD SIMPLY PHASE OUT THAT PART OF EDX PROGRAM FOR TIME BEING.

9. ACCEDING TO MEA REQUEST ON POINTS (B) AND (C), HOWEVER, WOULD IN EFFECT HAMSTRING MOST MISSION ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA. WHILE EFFORT TO LIMIT CONTACTS OF LABOR OFFICER PERHAPS UNDERSTANDABLE IN VIEW LONG-STANDING FMG SENSITIVITY IN THIS SECTOR (PRESUMABLY HEIGHTENED BY RECENT UDOJI UNREST), ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENT WOULD SET DANGEROUS PRECEDENT FOR MEA CONTROL

OF MISSION CONTACTS WITH ANY AND ALL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ELEMENTS OF NIGERIAN SOCIETY. AS FOR CONTACTS WITH OTHER MINISTRIES, MEA INTERPOSITION WOULD BE IMPRACTICABLE AND WOULD PROBABLY IN EFFECT LIMIT CONTACTS LARGELY TO MEA ITSELF.

10. WHILE WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD RESIST LIMITATIONS PROPOSED UNDER (B) AND (C) AS STRONGLY AS POSSIBLE, POINTING OUT UNFLATTERING TOTALITARIAN IMAGE SUCH ARRANGMENT WOULD GIVE FMG, WE WILL AT SOME TIME QUIETLY EXPLORE WAYS OF LOWERING LABOR OFFICER'S PROFILE DURING THIS SENSITIVE PERIOD IN EFFORT TO DEFUSE SITUATION. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, FMG HAS TRADITIONALLY REFUSED TO PERMIT FOREIGN MISSIONS TO HAVE LABOR ATTACHES AS SUCH, SO THAT OUR AND UK HICOM LABOR OFFICERS HOLD DIPLOMATIC CONFIDENTIAL

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TITLE OF FIRST OR SECOND SECRETARY. UK HICOM HAS IN PAST EXPRESSED PARTICULAR CONCERN TO US OVER POSSIBILITY OF RESTRICTION OF ACTIVITIES OF OUR LABOR OFFICERS. WE WILL CONSULT THEM ON ISSUE IN ATTEMPT DEVELOP MODALITIES WHICH WOULD AFFORD MEA SOME REASSURANCE IN THIS AREA WHILE PERMITTING POLITICAL OFFICER TO CONTINUE ADEQUATE LABOR CONTACTS.

11. PENDING RECEIPT OF DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS AND GUIDANCE, WE PROPOSE ADHERE TO PRESENT MODI OPERANDI WHILE AVOIDING ANY HIGHLY VISIBLE ACTIONS THAT MIGHT PRECIPITATE A FOLLOW-ON DEMARCHE. OLISEMEKA'S OBSERVATION THAT THIS IS SUBJECT IYALLA MAY WISH TO DISCUSS WITH AMBASSADOR EASUM INDICATES THEY THEMSELVES ARE NOT THINKING IN TERMS OF OVERNIGHT CHANGES. CROSBY

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